



Gregory J. Nickels
Mayor of Seattle

July 13, 2004

Council President Jan Drago
Councilmember Peter Steinbrueck
Councilmember Richard Conlin

Dear Council President Drago, Councilmember Steinbrueck and Councilmember Conlin:

I would like to express appreciation for work by Council staff on South Lake Union issues, especially assistance with review of the impacts report by Dr. Paul Sommers. The Sommers report is now complete and is attached for your review.

A July 7 Central Staff memo authored by Peter Harris provides important validation of Dr. Sommers' finding that major development is underway at South Lake Union and much more is coming. The memo supports the finding that development will transform South Lake Union, providing thousands of new good-paying jobs and thousands of new units of housing. The memo validates the findings of substantial tax revenue over 20 years – up to \$333 million to the City and up to \$1.3 billion for the state as a whole.

Seattle's position on change at South Lake Union should be clear, and this is where I have a few concerns with the staff memo. The memo seems to raise anew whether the City should welcome these jobs, and it revisits past decisions. It appears to raise the question should we go forward with the wharf at South Lake Union, a council-approved project that just opened. Further, I'm puzzled by the memo asking whether the City should attempt to direct biotech elsewhere, such as to Pier 91, which is zoned for industrial and manufacturing.

This is not the time for an academic debate for how much we want biotech or where it ought to go. Change is already underway at South Lake Union, and we must build the infrastructure to support this growth. That point is fundamental to the Comprehensive Plan and the Growth Management Act, which require local government to provide for growth, not respond to growth after the fact. That is the lesson learned from parts of King County, where infrastructure and services came too late to adequately serve growth. In South Lake Union, we know what's coming. The thousands of people who will work and live in South Lake Union will need water to drink, electricity to power their lights, parks for recreation; and convenient transit to connect to the rest of the City.



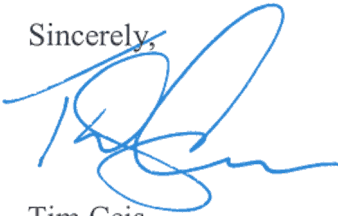
Council President Drago, Councilmember Steinbrueck and Councilmember Conlin
July 13, 2004
Page 2

The staff memo also fails to recognize Council decisions on South Lake Union. A year ago, for example, the Council in Resolution 30610 unanimously called for “improving infrastructure to support long term growth and revitalization” at South Lake Union. That resolution encouraged efforts to make South Lake Union the region’s most competitive location for biotech. It called for improvements to the Mercer/Valley corridor and transportation connections to downtown; development of the new park (which includes the wharf); a new electrical substation; investments in new affordable housing; and construction guidelines that promote our environmental goals.

The Council and the Mayor agree on the direction at South Lake Union. For certain, there will be important discussions ahead as we review individual steps in that direction. The mayor looks forward to cooperative work in that regard because we may find ways to improve on ideas, as we did at Northgate; or we may see confirmation that our initial policy steps are sound, as we found in the recent Parsons Brinckerhoff analysis of the streetcar proposal.

Together, we will welcome great new jobs, build infrastructure to support new growth, and create a great new neighborhood.

Sincerely,



Tim Ceis
Deputy Mayor